

Update from the Department of Early Learning April 2011

DIRECTOR'S NOTE

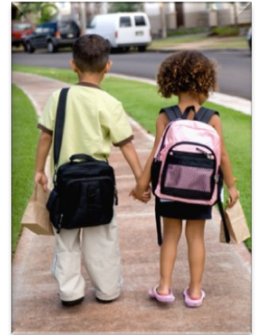
Today, the state House of Representatives released its proposed 2011-2013 operating budget, attempting to close a \$5.1 billion budget shortfall. You can view the proposal online at <http://leap.leg.wa.gov/>

The House budget includes \$4.4 billion in reductions. We are still reviewing the proposal, and of course, the Senate will issue its budget in the days to come. In terms of our state's early learners, the proposal:

- Preserves funding for the Early Childhood Education and Assistance Program (ECEAP).
- Transfers the Medicaid Treatment Child Care program to DEL.
- Eliminates the Career and Wage Ladder program.
- Funds the Washington Kindergarten Inventory of Developing Skills (WaKIDS).
- Funds continued implementation of full-day kindergarten in high-poverty schools.
- Reduces DEL agency administration funding.
- Preserves funding for child care resource & referral core services.
- Eliminates funding to administer seasonal child care subsidies (DEL previously contracted locally for this administration, but plans to move this work to the Department of Social and Health Services).
- Establishes an account for a portable background check clearance registry for child care employees.
- Appropriates funding to the Home Visiting Services account for evidence-based home visiting services.

We will continue to share information throughout the budget process.

—Bette Hyde, Director



DEL Director Bette Hyde and Thrive by Five Washington President & CEO Nina Auerbach talk about home visiting. Representatives of Fight Crime: Invest in Kids Washington also presented.

DEL, Thrive, law enforcement present on home visiting

Evidence-based home visiting services help improve school readiness, child health and public safety in Washington, a panel including DEL Director Bette Hyde told the Senate Early Learning & K-12 Education Committee on March 23. We will deliver a similar presentation to the House Early Learning & Human Services Committee at 9 a.m. on April 7.

In our state, several entities are working to leverage public and private dollars to support and expand home visiting services. Watch the presentation and learn more about home visiting on our blog, DEL Connect, at www.del.wa.gov/connect

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Seven communities to participate in next steps for federal funding opportunity

Washington anticipates funding two to three communities in the first year of the grant.

DEL, in partnership with the Department of Health (DOH), Department of Social and Health Services (DSHS), and the Council for Children and Families, is leading a process to develop a Washington State Home Visiting Plan, a key strategy outlined in the state's 10-year Early Learning Plan. One source of funding for home visiting in Washington is the federal Affordable Health Care Act. This five-year grant program is called the Maternal, Infant, and Early Childhood Home Visiting (MIECHV) Program. Washington has been awarded \$1.3 million in federal grant funds from October 2010-September 2012.



There are two phases in this process:

Phase 1 includes selecting the highest at-risk communities that can meet the federal requirements.

- First, communities were ranked on risk factors identified in the DOH Needs Assessment, including risk by geographic area and race/ethnicity.
- Second, communities or populations ranked as highest risk had to be implementing one or more of the evidence-based home visiting models identified in the federal grant guidance.

In Washington, three of the seven designated evidence-based models are represented as: Early Head Start: Home-Based Option, Nurse Family Partnership and Parents as Teachers. Additionally, there was a preference that both Eastern and Western Washington were represented in the initial community selection process.

For phase 2, the invited communities are: **Pierce County- Council Districts 2, 4, 5 and 6, Yakima County, Snohomish County-North Everett, Franklin County, Mason County, Grant County and South King County.**

These communities will be invited to complete a more in-depth assessment of community need and capacity to implement home visiting and achieve measurable results. Of the seven communities identified, Washington anticipates funding two to three communities in the first year of the grant. Final funding decisions will be announced in late April. For information, visit www.del.wa.gov/development/visiting/.

Staff training; using electronic licensing forms during visits

Data collected will help DEL analyze work; spend more time on technical assistance

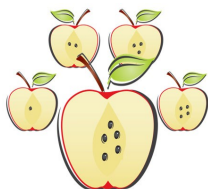
To help improve accuracy and consistency in child care licensing, DEL began to use electronic licensing forms last month. DEL worked with a contractor to create a mobile software program on tablet computers for our licensing staff to use when doing monitoring and inspection visits. An email was sent to our licensed child care provider listserv to make them aware of the new technology when DEL staff visit.

This technology upgrade has exciting benefits.

- Child care providers will benefit from licensors who can more easily access forms, collect signatures, and reference specific WACs and RCWs without Internet access. DEL licensors will be able to spend more quality time observing and providing technical assistance to licensees.
- DEL staff will spend less time preparing paper-based reports, inputting data and mailing copies to licensees. They will be able to travel more easily and have fewer printing costs.

For more information Frequently Asked Questions document is available on the "Providers & Educators" section of www.del.wa.gov.

QRIS parent meeting in Seattle provides valuable input



Three groups of parent leaders met in Seattle on March 7 and 8 to discuss high-quality child care for children and families, with an emphasis on parent and provider partnerships within a Quality Rating and Improvement System (QRIS). Seeds to Success, our state's QRIS, is in the second year of a field test in five communities.

Representatives from DEL's parent advisory group, parent leaders from the community café initiative, and parents from Early Support for Infants and Toddlers, the state's early intervention program, met and provided perspectives on building high-quality child care. The meeting was supported by the National Alliance of Children's Trust and Prevention Funds. As summarized by consultant Charles Bruner who facilitated the meeting:

"Parent leaders underscored that fundamental to quality in care is the relationship the provider has with the child and his or her family. All care arrangements must be safe and healthy and the single best marker for determining if they contribute to the child's development is whether the child is welcomed, attended to, participates, and has fun within a setting of learning and activity. The heart of a program is its staff and the staff's willingness to see the uniqueness of each child, the child's value, and the common aspirations for all children to succeed. This comes even before teacher credentials, curriculum, activities, field trips, and play environments in defining quality."

This feedback will help strengthen the Seeds to Success standards as the field test ends on June 30, 2011 and the model is adapted based on resulting data. For more information about Seeds to Success, visit www.del.wa.gov/seeds



Washington among top in nation for child care center licensing

Recommendations include increasing frequency of inspections, levels of education

Washington once again ranks among the top in the nation for our licensing rules and oversight for child care centers, according to a National Association for Child Care Resource & Referral Agencies (NACCRRA) report released this week.

Washington ranks sixth in the nation overall for our center regulations and oversight. We ranked ninth in the last NACCRRA report, issued in 2009.

NACCRRA highlighted some of the strengths in our center licensing work, including: unannounced monitoring visits and complaint inspections; regulations that address all developmental domains as well as all basic health and safety standards; and an emphasis on parent involvement and information.

The Department of Early Learning licenses about 2,000 centers around the state, which includes school-age programs. For more information and to read the full report, visit our blog, DEL Connect, at www.del.wa.gov/connect

Immunization information from our partners at the Department of Health

CIS mailings end this year

The Certificate of Immunization Status (CIS) that must be completed for children to attend child care, preschool, or school in Washington state will be available to download only from our website. The Department of Health traditionally sends copies of the CIS to school districts and child care licensors to distribute locally. You should have received the forms this year, but due to budget cuts, DOH cannot send any more copies after this year.

You can order copies from the Department of Printing while supplies last. You can also encourage parents to print a copy from home to fill out before they enroll their child. Only the official DOH CIS is valid. Download the CIS from DOH at www.doh.wa.gov/cfh/Immunize/forms/default.htm

DOH has a listserv to send immunization information to schools and child cares. This serves as the program's main tool for telling you about important school and child care issues.

Visit <http://listserv.wa.gov/cgi-bin/wa?A0=DOH-SCHOOL-CHILDCARE-IMMS-INFO> and follow the instructions. Or send an email to Chrystal Averette at chrystal.averette@doh.wa.gov.

2011-2012 vaccines required for child care/preschool attendance now available

You can find the chart of vaccines required for child care/preschool attendance for 2011-2012 on the Department of Health (DOH) website at www.doh.wa.gov/cfh/Immunize/schools/vaccine.htm. The chart was initially published at the end of January, but it has been revised. The main changes to the March 2011 chart include:

Polio

- National recommendations were updated 8/7/09 requiring the fourth dose to be given on or after the fourth birthday. Children who got four valid doses before 8/7/09 do not need an additional dose.
- If a child got dose four on or after 8/7/09, dose four must be given on or after the fourth birthday AND dose three and four must be separated by six months.
- Children between ages 4 and 6 attending child care or preschool must meet the new polio requirements.

PCV

- The second page inaccurately showed the minimum age for dose 1 as four weeks. The minimum age should be six weeks.

For questions, please contact Trang Kuss at 360.236.3760 or trang.kuss@doh.wa.gov.

DOH launches flu prevention campaign

This campaign takes a lighter approach to reminding people of the importance of getting vaccinated against the flu. The campaign uses artful design and a play on words to describe Washington as "WashYourHandsingTon – where everyone washes their hands, covers their cough, and gets a flu vaccine."

The Centers for Disease Control recommends that everyone six months and older get flu vaccine. The flu vaccine is especially important for babies, young kids, pregnant women, people over 50, and people with certain medical conditions like asthma, diabetes, and heart disease. Babies less than six months are too young to get the flu vaccine themselves and rely on their caregivers and family to protect them. Adults and older kids in the home and child care setting can offer protection for the baby by getting the flu shot and other immunizations like Tdap, which protects against pertussis, or whooping cough.

To find an immunization clinic, contact your health care provider or call the Family Health Hotline at 1-800-322-2588.



DSHS to determine Seasonal Child Care eligibility

Families contact DSHS on July 1; Working Connections available until program restarts

The Seasonal Child Care subsidy program helps families pay for provide safe, licensed child care while children's parents work in agricultural settings. Washington served more than 3,000 children in 2010. DEL suspended the program through the end of the fiscal year (June 1), and families can apply for Working Connections Child Care. Beginning July 1, 2011 DSHS will manage the applications and eligibility determinations for the seasonal child care, instead of local contractors. To apply, families can DSHS call center at 1.877.501.2233 or apply online.

DEL filed new subsidy program rules on April 1 to support this change. There will be opportunities for comment at two public hearings in May. More information will be posted at www.del.wa.gov/laws/development/.

Reminder: DEL began using a new background check form and fingerprint process on Feb. 1, 2011. The new background check form is online and in DEL offices. The old form will no longer be accepted as of April 30. For more information, visit www.del.wa.gov/requirements/new/background.aspx

If you have five minutes...

- Thrive by Five Washington blogger Paul Nyhan on March 23 looked at a new report about Maryland's successful kindergarten readiness efforts and its implications for Washington and our pilot assessment process, Washington Kindergarten Inventory of Developing Skills (WaKIDS).
Read it at:
<http://birthtothrive.thrivebyfivewa.org/>
- Listen to U.S. Education Secretary Arne Duncan discuss the state Department of Education proposal with the Governor and legislators on March 14.
www.del.wa.gov/connect
- Check out the KCTS 9 Golden Apple Awards website and consider whether you know someone deserving a nomination.
<http://kcts9.org/education/golden-apple-awards>

Upcoming early learning events...

April 22 — Temporary layoff day for DEL employees

May 4-6 — Infant and Early Childhood Conference in Tacoma, www.ieccwa.org

May 16-18 — Trainer & Educator Conference 2011 in Lake Chelan, www.educationaltrainingpartners.org

August 11-12 — Starting Strong Conference in Spokane, www.esd101.net/startingstrong

